

Common Core Standards

The New York State Board of Regents adopted a new set of curriculum standards called the Common Core State Standards. These standards were adopted as part of a national movement to raise performance expectations for students. The overarching goal of the Common Core standards is to better prepare students for the demands of college and careers in our global economy. The Common Core State Standards focus on two key areas: [English Language Arts](#) and mathematics. The English language arts standards for reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language are also translated to literacy standards in history and social studies, science, and technical subjects. The expectation is that students will develop literacy skills specific to these subject areas in addition to what they learn in their English language arts classes.

These Standards provide a consistent and clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know how to support learning goals in order for each child to meet and exceed their learning potential. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our students need for success in college and careers in order to compete successfully in the global economy.

Within Music classes teachers support the Common Core standards for English Language Arts in a variety of ways. Depending upon the grade level and the type of music class, students may discuss and evaluate the music of historically significant composers, the music of a particular culture, as well as music from diverse styles, genres and performing artists. Students are also called upon to self-assess and evaluate their individual performance or the performance of their ensemble in an articulate manner using relevant and appropriate vocabulary. This may be done verbally or in writing. Students are encouraged to develop and use a vocabulary that evidences an understanding of the elements of music as well as the broader knowledge base they have gained from the study of all content areas. In class "Word Walls" are employed to support student learning of content specific vocabulary.

Music classes may occasionally include lessons which require the close reading of informational texts. These lessons facilitate student development of vocabulary and comprehension skills and require students to answer text related questions and compose essays employing information from the text.

In class discussions and informational text may also relate how and why an historical period or cultural perspective influenced the composers and music that was created in that setting or how music and musicians influenced historical events. Students may also be given assignments which require the use of library or internet based resources to research and acquire background information on a musician/composer, a particular culture, a current trend, or an historical period and how they relate to the child's study of music in school.

Interestingly, aptitude in math has often been correlated to a strong musical aptitude. Within the music curriculum the most obvious link to the Common Core for Math is the extensive use of fractions within the notation and reading of rhythm. Our lessons in music most definitely support the development of a strong understanding of fractions on the part of students. Research has also shown that mastery of fractions is a significant predictor of later success in Algebra. Music study also supports student understanding of proportions, percentages, patterns, and sequences through the analysis of rhythm, melodic contour, and musical form.

Overall, the strategies employed in our music classrooms help the children to see the connections among the various areas of study and to develop a broad knowledge base that supports their learning and understanding in every content area as well as their preparation for future careers or college study.

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